

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ARA-10 EA-10 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00
CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00
INRE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
HA-05 MCE-00 ACDA-12 /121 W
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O 061028Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY CAPE TOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6880
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY GABORONE IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LAGOS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 CAPE TOWN 0423

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PORG, SF, WA
SUBJECT: NAMIBIA: INFORMAL MEETING WITH BOTHA

REF: USUN 720,

1. YESTERDAY (MARCH 5) SIR DAVID SCOTT AND I HAD TWO
SESSIONS WITH PIK BOTHA TO COVER THE POINTS CONTAINED
REFTEL. IT APPEARED THAT BOTHA WAS WILLING TO MAKE
FURTHER CONCESSIONS IN ORDER TO REACH AGREEMENT BUT
WE WILL NOT KNOW THE EXTENT OF THESE UNTIL HE CHECKS HIS
IDEAS WITH THE PRIME MINISTER AND REPORTS BACK TO US WITH
MORE PRECISION.

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2. THERE FOLLOWS OUR JOINT REPORT WHICH WE HAVE GIVEN TO
OUR THREE OTHER COLLEAGUES FOR FORWARDING TO NEW YORK
AND CAPITALS:

"1. ON BEHALF OF THE FIVE, THE US AND UK AMBASSADORS
MET WITH PIK BOTHA FOR ALMOST 4 HOURS ON SUNDAY, 5 MARCH

IN TWO SESSIONS. BRAND FOURIE PARTICIPATED IN THE SECOND.

"2. BEFORE WE HAD A CHANCE TO GET INTO THE SUBSTANCE OF THE SPEAKING NOTES, PIK BOTHA, WHO HAD JUST GOT BACK FROM NAMIBIA, REVIEWED THE DIFFICULTIES HE FACES IN SELLING AN AGREEMENT TO THE DIFFERENT GROUPS IN THE TERRITORY. HE LAID SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON THE SHARP AND GROWING DIVISION IN THE WHITE COMMUNITY. HE STATED THAT THE DU PLESSIS GROUP (ADTUR) WHICH HAS 10-8 MAJORITY IN THE TERRITORIAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY IS SEEKING TO FORCE A NEW (WHITE) ELECTION TO THAT ASSEMBLY IN ORDER TO ESTABLISH THEIR LEADERSHIP IN THE WHITE COMMUNITY AND IN SO DOING DESTROY THE IMPORTANT ROLE WHICH DIRK MUDGE IS NOW EXERCISING AS LEADER OF THE MULTI-RACIAL DTA. HE (BOTHA) IS FIGHTING FROM THIS END TO POSTPONE THE HOLDING OF SUCH AN ELECTION. HE HAS ARGUED, SO FOR SUCCESSFULLY, THAT IN LIGHT OF THE PLANS TO HOLD ELECTIONS FOR THE NEW CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY THERE IS NO TIME TO HOLD AN ETHNIC WHITE ELECTION. HE SAID THAT HE WAS ALSO FACED WITH STRONG LOBBYING BY CONSERVATIVE ELEMENTS WITHIN THE SOUTH AFRICAN PARLIMENT WHICH ARE NOT SYMPATHETIC WITH THE NEW APPROACH ON NAMIBIA. HE ADDED WITH SOME HEAT 'I DON'T WANT A WHITE ELECTION. I DON'T KNOW WHAT THE RESULT WOULD BE. DU PLESSIS WANTS TO DESTROY THE MUEN"

BUT IF MUDGE LOST I BELIEVE IT WOULD LEAD TO A HEAD-ON
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WHITE/BLACK CONFRONTATION.' HE ALSO POINTED OUT THAT IF AKTUR WERE TO WIN SUCH AN ELECTION THEY WOULD PRESS FOR AN INTERNAL SETTLEMENT AND USE THE RHODESIA PRECEDENT TO SECURE RESERVED WHITE SEATS.

"3. WE NEXT PRESENTED THE SPEAKING NOTES ORALLY INVITING HIS COMMENT AFTER EACH SECTION. REGARDING THE DATE FOR THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF ELECTIONS BOTHA ONCE AGAIN SAID HE CANNOT DELAY MUCH LONGER. HE THOUGHT THAT HE COULD WAIT FOR TWO WEEKS AT MOST. HE ADMITTED THAT THE PARTIES IN SOUTH WEST ARE NOW PREPARED TO ACCEPT A DELAY IN THE HOLDING OF ELECTIONS UNTIL AUGUST OR EVEN EARLY SEPTEMBER. AKTUR WOULD EVEN BE PREPARED TO POSTPONE IT UNTIL NEXT YEAR IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE AN ETHNIC WHITE ELECTION. BOTHA FORCEFULLY SAID THE GROUPS IN SOUTH WEST DO NOT HAVE THE SOLE PREROGATIVE OF DECIDING THIS ISSUE. THE SAG BEARS A HEAVY FINANCIAL AND POLITICAL BURDEN AND WISHES TO MOVE THE TERRITORY TO INDEPENDENCE AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE. IN HIS VIEW THE VERY LATEST DATE FOR AN ELECTION WOULD BE THE END OF AUGUST. WE WERE NOT CONVINCED THAT THIS WAS NECESSARILY HIS LAST WORD, ALTHOUGH THE TENSIONS IN THE WHITE COMMUNITY MAY WELL BE SERIOUS.

"4. ON THE ISSUE OF RELEASE OF PRISONERS AND
DETAINEES BOTHA STATED THAT THERE WERE TWO REQUIREMENTS.
ONE WAS THE NEED FOR OVAMBO INVOLVEMENT IN CHECKING ON
THE REAL MOTIVES OF ANY NAMIBIANS WHO OPT TO REMAIN OUT-
SIDE THE COUNTRY. THE SECOND AND MORE IMPORTANT WAS THAT
THE SAG NEEDS A MECHANISM LIKE THE PANEL OF JURISTS TO
RESOLVE DIFFERENCES OVER RELEASE OF PRISONERS BEING HELD
BY SOUTH AFRICA. WITHOUT SAYING SO IN SO MANY WORDS, HE
MADE CLEAR THAT HE NEEDS SOME SUCH DEVICE TO JUSTIFY TO
DOMESTIC OPINION THE RELEASE OF PRISONERS WHO HAVE BEEN
CONVICTED BY SOUTH AFRICAN COURTS.

"5. ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE ADMINISTRATOR-GENERAL
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AND THE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE, WE TOOK HIM CAREFULLY
THROUGH PARAGRAPHS 5-9 OF THE SPEAKING NOTES. HE WAS
CLEARLY IMPRESSED WITH THE POSSIBLE DANGERS INVOLVED IN
REFERENCE OF DISPUTES TO THE SECRETARY GENERAL AND SAID
THAT HE WOULD LIKE TO LOOK AT THE WHOLE PROBLEM FROM A
MORE POSITIVE POINT OF VIEW. IN PARTICULAR, HE SUGGESTED
THAT WE OUGHT ALL TO ASSUME THAT THESE TWO OFFICIALS WOULD

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QUICKLY BEGIN TO ACHIEVE A WORKING RELATIONSHIP THAT WOULD PERMIT THEM TO RESOLVE DIFFERENCES WITHOUT REFERENCE TO OUTSIDE BODIES. WOULD IT NOT BE POSSIBLE TO TURN OUR FORMULA AROUND SO AS TO INSIST THAT DECISIONS SHOULD BE TAKEN BY THE ADMINISTRATOR-GENERAL AND THE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE REACHING A CONSENSUS? WOULD IT NOT BE BETTER TO AVOID RAISING IN THE PAPER THE PROSPECT OF NON-AGREEMENT AND THE EFFECT THAT WOULD HAVE? THE PRINCIPLE OF CONSENSUS SECURES AN EFFECTIVE VETO WITHOUT MAKING THIS EXPLICIT. WE REVIEWED WITH HIM THE DIFFERENT FORMULATIONS FOR PARAGRAPH 5 AND POINTED OUT THAT THE LATEST DRAFT GIVEN TO BRAND FOURIE INCORPORATES THE CONSENSUS CONCEPT. HE SAID THAT HE WOULD REVIEW THE CLARIFICATIONS
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WE HAVE GIVEN FOURIE WITH THIS IN MIND.

"6. WE FOUND A DEGREE OF FLEXIBILITY ON THE LEVEL OF THE RESIDUAL SOUTH AFRICAN FORCE WHICH COULD PROVIDE A FORMULA FOR OVERCOMING THIS OBSTACLE. HE COINED HIS RESPONSE TO THIS ISSUE IN THE FORM OF THREE QUESTIONS. THE FIRST QUESTION WAS TO ASK WHETHER THE FIVE WOULD BE PREPARED TO GIVE A WRITTEN BUT SECRET UNDERTAKING THAT THEY WOULD INTERVENE MILITARILY IF THE CUBANS OR THE MPLA INVADE NAMIBIA FROM ANGOLA. WE GAVE HIM NO ENCOURAGEMENT WHATEVER ON THIS. HIS SECOND QUESTIONS WAS BASED ON THE PREMISE THAT MOST OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN TROOPS AT PRESENT IN NAMIBIA WERE IN FACT CIVILIANS TEMPORARILY CALLED UP FOR MILITARY SERVICE. HE ASKED WHETHER THE 1,600 SUPPORT TROOPS COULD BE DRESSED IN CIVILIAN CLOTHES AS A WAY OF MEETING THE PROBLEM? WE SAID IT WOULD NOT BE ACCEPTABLE FOR THE TROOPS MERELY TO CHANGE INTO CIVILIAN CLOTHES ON A GIVEN DAY AND REMAIN IN PLACE. UNDER QUESTIONING OF HOW HE MIGHT OTHERWISE PUT CIVILIANS IN THIS ROLE FOLLOWING WITHDRAWAL OF THE EXISTING UNITS, HE VOLUNTEERED THAT SOME OF THESE MEN COULD RETURN TO PERFORM THE SERVICE FUNCTION AS CIVILIANS. (HE SUGGESTED THAT THEY MIGHT HAVE TO REMAIN UNDER MILITARY DISCIPLINE, ALTHOUGH HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE ADMINISTRATOR-GENERAL MIGHT BE INVOLVED IN THE COMMAND SYSTEM.)

"7. BOTHA'S THIRD QUESTION WAS WHETHER, AS A FURTHER

ALTERNATIVE, WE WOULD HAVE ANY OBJECTION TO POLICE UNITS CARRYING OUT THE SERVICE FUNCTION. WE POINTED OUT THAT WE DID NOT BELIEVE THAT THE POLICE AND SERVICE FUNCTIONS SHOULD BE MIXED BUT THAT IF THERE WERE A NEED TO STRENGTHEN THE EXISTING POLICE FORCE THIS MIGHT INDEED BE WELCOME TO THE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE, AS INDICATED IN PARA 14 OF OUR SPEAKING NOTES.

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"8. WITH REGARD TO THE LEVEL OF THE UN MILITARY CONTINGENT, BOTHA SAID THAT HE WOULD NO LONGER INSIST THAT IT BE LIMITED TO NO MORE THAN 1000, OR THAT UN FORCES ALSO BE POSTED ON THE ANGOLAN SIDE. HE COULD NOT, HOWEVER, ACCEPT OUR FORMULATION THAT WOULD GIVE THE UN SYG EXCLUSIVE RESPONSIBILITY FOR SETTING THE FIGURE. HE THOUGHT THE CONCEPT OF CONSENSUS SHOULD BE INTRODUCED HERE ALSO, WITH THE SYG NOT SETTING THE LEVEL WITHOUT THE ADMINISTRATOR HAVING A SAY IN THE MATTER. WE POINTED OUT THAT WE CONTEMPLATED CONSULTATION BETWEEN THE UN AND APPROPRIATE AUTHORITIES IN NAMIBIA, INCLUDING THE AG, AS EXPRESSED IN PARA 18 OF OUR SPEAKING NOTES, AND THE REVISION OF PARA 8D OF THE PROPOSALS. BOTHA SAID CONSULTATION WAS NOT ENOUGH. WE POINTED OUT THAT NEITHER THE SYG NOR THE UNSC WOULD ACCEPT LIMITATIONS ON THE SYG'S RESPONSIBILITY IN THIS AREA. BOTHA SAID PERHAPS SOME UNDERSTANDING COULD BE WORKED OUT THAT WOULD GET AROUND THE PROBLEM WITHOUT PUBLICLY FIXING LEVELS IN ADVANCE.

"9. BOTHA PROMISED PROMPT CONSIDERATION OF, AND REPLY TO, THE POINTS WE GAVE HIM TODAY AND THE SPECIFIC PROPOSALS HANDED TO BRAND FOURIE LAST WEEK."

ADENDUM

3. SINCE PREPARING THE FOREGOING, WE HAVE RECEIVED CLARIFICATION FROM BOTHA ON REMARKS HE MADE YESTERDAY ABOUT DATE FOR WITHDRAWAL OF THE SADF FORCES. ADD FOLLOWING NEW PARAGRAPH AFTER PARA 7:

"BOTHA RAISED THE ISSUE OF WITHDRAWAL. HE SAID HE COULD NOT ACCEPT THE PRESENT FORMULATION OF THE FIVE. TO PULL OUT TROOPS SO SOON WOULD PROVOKE A CRISIS OF CONFIDENCE AMONG WHITES AND BLACKS. HE MAINTAINED THE SOUTH AFRICAN POSITION THAT THE NEW GOVERNMENT SHOULD DECIDE. REFERRING TO THEIR FORMULATION HE SAID HE WOULD BE WILLING TO LIMIT IT TO THE STATEMENT THAT ARRANGEMENTS REGARDING SADF WITHDRAWAL WILL BE MADE AS SOON AS THE NEW GOVERNMENT IS ELECTED. HE WOULD DROP THE SPECIFIC MENTION TO THE NEW

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GOVERNMENT DECIDING WHETHER TO ASK THE SADF TO REMAIN.
WE TOLD BOTHA WE HAD NO INSTRUCTIONS ON THIS POINT BUT
ARGUED FOR FLEXIBILITY AND HE AGREED TO LOOK AT THE QUESTION
AGAIN."
BOWDLER

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